

The Cary Arboretum



of The New York Botanical Garden

A Newsletter published for Friends of the Arboretum
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A Special Invitation to Members of "Friends of the Cary Arboretum"

The Director and Staff Members
of the Cary Arboretum

cordially invite you and a guest to attend.

the Members' premiere of

"A GIFT OF LAND"

a documentary film portrait of the Cary Arboretum.

This 25-minute film, produced by Vision Associates, is a beautiful and informative full-color account of the research work, the horticultural development, the educational activities, and the future plans and programs of the Arboretum, all portrayed against the background of a magnificent natural landscape as it changes with the seasons.

Friday, October 8, 1976

Bennett College Auditorium

5:30 p.m.

Millbrook, New York

Refreshments

R.S.V.P.: Ms. Janice Claiborne, Cary Arboretum, 914-677-5071

Your membership card will be your ticket of admission,
but please let us know whether you plan to attend.

Three Interesting New Plants To See at the Arboretum

By Robert S. Hebb
Arboretum Horticulturist

The Arboretum receives numerous requests for horticultural information pertaining to the selection of trees and shrubs for specific locations and their ornamental effect in the landscape. Homeowners, garden club members, nurserymen, landscape architects, town planners, and owners of private and commercial buildings and developments are increasingly aware of the importance of good aesthetic planning, whether it be for a modest backyard or for a parking area in a huge shopping center. In attempting to reply to the many questions we are asked daily, we have found that even though our climate often imposes severe restrictions on the types of plants which may be safely used in Dutchess County, the choice frequently is far wider and more varied than most people realize.

As the Arboretum plant collections expand and it becomes possible to display more diverse types of trees and shrubs in an appropriate setting, we will inform our readers about plants that are of outstanding ornamental merit and that deserve to be more widely used in this area.

The newly installed landscaping around the greenhouses, for example, includes many interesting plants, three of which we would like to tell you about at this time. When you next visit the Arboretum, you may wish to examine these, as well as the numerous other plantings we have developed there.

JAPANESE DOGWOOD — *Cornus kousa*

Considered by many to be the finest of all small flowering trees, this Asiatic relative of our own native Flowering Dogwood is one tree which could well be in every garden, but unfortunately it is infrequently seen in this area.

It is extremely handsome in all seasons, and forms a small bushy tree about 20 feet in height, well-clothed to the ground with horizontal branches. As with most dogwoods, the small clusters of flowers are quite inconspicuous. However, these are surrounded by four larger, pointed white bracts which are borne erect in rows above the branches and often are confused by laymen as being the true flowers. These bracts produce the beautiful effect when the tree is in flower.

Blossoming time is during late May and June, well after our native dogwood has gone by. The 1½-3½ inch bracts remain on the tree for about three weeks, and sometimes they turn to a delicious shade of pale pink before they drop.

Another great attraction of the Japanese Dogwood is the strawberry-like fruit which becomes conspicuous during late summer. In contrast to the native Flowering Dogwood, which has small red berries that are quickly consumed by birds, the 2-3 inch fruit of Japanese Dogwood lasts for several weeks, and a well-laden tree is a beautiful sight to behold. Autumn leaf coloration is bright red to scarlet. For added winter interest, the bark of older specimens frequently peels off in small patches to reveal a cream-colored section of trunk beneath.



Japanese Dogwood *Cornus kousa*

The Japanese Dogwood is truly a tree of year-round beauty. It may be used effectively either as a single small specimen or, because of the dense branching to the ground, as a useful screen, achieved by planting several specimens at 10-12 foot intervals. A fairly moisture-retentive (but not wet) soil is desirable, and this species will withstand a more exposed location than will the native dogwood.

Spring planting is preferred. This plant is fairly easy to obtain from local nurseries.

SERBIAN SPRUCE — *Picea omorika*

The Serbian Spruce is one of the most satisfactory and remarkable of all hardy conifers in our area. The outstanding feature of this tree is its graceful, slender, and nearly columnar habit of growth. A mature 60-80 foot specimen can be recognized easily from a considerable distance because of its dramatic spire-like growth pattern.

Young plants have a pyramidal shape, not unlike many spruces, but they grow fairly rapidly and taper with age, until the spire-like form of the mature tree is reached. The short branches on the uppermost portions of the tree arch down somewhat, then assume a nearly horizontal position, while the longer, lower branches are more pendulous with upward arching tips. This distinctly graceful and refined habit of growth is considerably more pleasing than the massive funereal effect of Norway Spruce or the tight, rigid feeling of Colorado Spruce, both so frequently overplanted in Dutchess County.

In addition to its aesthetic virtues, Serbian



Serbian Spruce *Picea omorika*

American Wings for Irish Skies

Falconry has long held a dubious distinction among ardent bird enthusiasts for its use of birds of prey in hunting. But today National Falconry of Ireland (NFI), an organization dedicated to raptor preservation, may help change the bad connotation of the term falconry — in cooperation with the Cary Arboretum.

In mid-October of this year, eight pairs of American raptors will be sent from Millbrook to Ireland so that NFI biologists can study them for clues that may help save comparable Irish species from extinction.

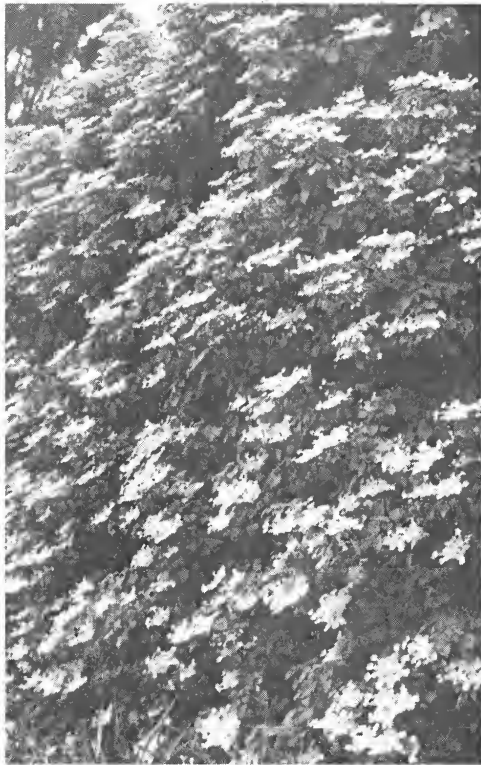
Peter Devers of Millbrook was asked by NFI to secure pairs of wild trapped birds to be used in Ireland so that captive breeding techniques can be perfected there. The Cary Arboretum, through the guidance of wildlife biologist Gus Tillman, secured the necessary permits from state and federal bureaus to make this international cooperation possible. The program was also endorsed by Dean Amadon of the Museum of Natural History.

So far, Devers has collected six different species of raptors — the great horned owl, the barred owl, the screech owl, the broad-wing hawk, the red-tail hawk, and the sparrow hawk. The captured birds of prey were mostly young birds, taken from the Millbrook area. None are an endangered American species.

Thus, National Falconry of Ireland, which was begun as a sporting venture by a German emigrant, Ernst Jocker, in the 1960's and which subsequently evolved into a raptor preservation organization, will soon have "American Wings for Irish Skies."



Great Horned Owl



Climbing Hydrangea *Hydrangea petiolaris*

Spruce is perfectly hardy to at least 15-20° below zero. It is tolerant of a wide variety of soil types (except excessively dry or wet), and it also may be planted in exposed windy situations. Plants are best seen in informal groupings of three or more, planted at least 20 feet apart.

One area nursery offers locally-grown Serbian Spruce in specimen size. Other nurseries can easily obtain it for you, if you order well in advance of planting time. Balled and burlaped specimens can be planted either in early autumn or spring.

CLIMBING HYDRANGEA — *Hydrangea petiolaris*

To most people the name "hydrangea" conjures up the image of a shrub with blue, pink, or white flowers. The Climbing Hydrangea, however, is a somewhat unorthodox member of the hydrangea clan, since it is a true climber which clings to any support by means of small root-like holdfasts. This characteristic makes it an extremely versatile plant with numerous possibilities for landscape use.

Perhaps the most dramatic effect of all can be obtained by planting Climbing Hydrangea at the base of a tree. After one or two seasons, the plant will start to cover the

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Russian Botanists Visit the Hudson Valley

Three visiting Russian botanists recently spent 20 days touring the Hudson Valley, the Catskills, the Adirondacks, and the Appalachian Mountains in search of plant seeds, cuttings, and research ideas that may help them protect the forests and endangered plants of their own country.

The scientists were in America as part of a bilateral, international agreement that launched a major cooperative program in the field of environmental protection. This particular exchange visit, with its emphasis on wild plant conservation, was coordinated by the Cary Arboretum, in conjunction with the Department of the Interior.

The Russian contingent — Boris Golovkin of the Polar Alpine Botanic Garden, Kirovsk, and Drs. Valeri Nekrasov and Alexi Skvorstsov, both of the Main Botanic Garden in Moscow — arrived in New York on August 20.

After spending the first night of their visit in Millbrook, the scientists and Dr. Thomas S. Elias, an assistant director of the Cary Arboretum, embarked on a six-day tour of Cranberry Lake and the Algonquin Mountain region in the Adirondacks and the Catskill Forest Preserve. In these areas they studied how wilderness tracts are protected by the State Parks Department. They also gathered seeds and cuttings similar to species found in northern Russia for future study.

Following their New York tour, the group travelled to the rich, fertile Appalachian Mountains near Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Since that range resembles the Caucasus

Mountains in southern Russia, the botanists found it stimulating to compare the similarities and to observe the contrasts with the flora of their own country.

The Russian visitors then returned to Millbrook, where they toured the Arboretum's 2,000 acres and visited the greenhouse complex, where plants from throughout the world are grown from seeds and cuttings.

The final stop on the tour was a visit to the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx, after which the group departed for their home country on September 7. One week later, three American scientists, Dr. Dale W. McNeal, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences at the University of the Pacific, Stockton, California; Dr. Jane Spock, Associate Professor of Environmental, Population and Organismic Biology at the University of Colorado; and Dr. Elias, were scheduled to leave on a 22-day reciprocal tour of forests and other areas of vegetation in southern Russia.

It is hoped that such unilateral exchanges of scientists will continue. They not only will aid immeasurably in preserving Russian and American forests, but it is hoped that they also will lead to development of hybrid trees capable of resisting plant diseases and pollution — problems common to both of our countries.

And — who knows — someday, perhaps, an American-Russian hybrid tree may help shade the city streets in Moscow and New York!

Cary Perspectives

Anguish in the Amazon

Last year Dr. Robert Goodland, the Cary Arboretum's ecologist, and I published a book outlining in some detail various environmental impacts expected to result from the rapid construction of the Transamazonian Highway by the Brazilian government. The largest of the remaining natural areas on earth, Amazonia—Brazilian and extra-Brazilian—is more than two-thirds the area of the 48 contiguous United States and supports unbelievably rich and diverse flora and fauna, in addition to numerous tribes of indigenous "Amerindians." As few of these living components, let alone the geophysical ones, are sufficiently well known to be functionally understood and thus managed viably on a sustained-yield basis, our slender volume added another voice to the chorus of protests entreating the responsible authorities to reconsider plans for the highway construction program. Whatever the effect of efforts such as ours, progress on the road system has been slowed, and reconsideration of parts of the project is underway.

It is because Amazonia may well hold the answers to so many modern dilemmas that thoughtful people throughout the world rose in horror at news that the Surui tribe in Brazil has been reduced from 800 to 200 in just a few years, with 70% of the survivors infected with tuberculosis, and at word that other tribes have been plundered by transient construction workers, while still others were driven out by starvation following the cutting and burning of the forest for pastureland. Dazed, disoriented, culturally-dislocated Indians, overwhelmed by modern machinery and huge construction equipment, loiter tentatively along roads and in settlements, begging for money to buy watches they do not know how to use or transistor radios emitting a language they do not understand. Yet these very Indians and their forebears are the only humans who have been able to exist, generation after generation, in balance with

the rest of their wonderfully complex ecosystem.

The appeal for conservation in the Amazon is no *cri de coeur* in the polemic prose so often employed as the vehicle of ecological activism. It is no lament for a bygone, primitive, innocent age. Rather, this appeal has very solid roots and a very rational philosophy: Mankind's only basis for long-term survival is a sustained-yield economy—largely dependent on renewable materials consumed at a pace not exceeding their natural renewal and not productive of byproducts harmful to biological systems. Wherever that principle is seriously violated, deliberately ignored, or even simply overlooked, notice should be drawn, not as a finger of accusation, but rather in an attempt to stimulate consideration of alternative courses.

It is encouraging to note that increasing attention is being given the sustained-yield principle, but as yet it has not penetrated the mainstream of thinking in business and government. Until it does, organizations such as the Cary Arboretum will continue to pursue research dedicated not just to human well-being but, more fundamentally, to the preservation of the world's irreplaceable plant and animal life—including the last survivors of a unique and once great human culture.

Howard S. Irwin
Director



Three New Plants (continued from page 3)

entire trunk and then creep out along the branches. This process takes full effect in about ten years. Large trees such as oaks and tulip trees, which develop massive trunks and have a fairly open habit of branching, make ideal supports for the Climbing Hydrangea. Incidentally, this creeping and climbing habit of this Hydrangea does not harm the tree, since it is used as a support only.

Large, flat flower clusters, about 6-10 inches in diameter, appear in mid-June. They are typical hydrangea blooms, with an outer ring of 1½ inch white sterile flowers surrounding a central cluster of duller white small fertile flowers. The leaves are a bright, lustrous green. Reddish-brown shredding bark on older stems is of considerable visual interest throughout the winter months.

Climbing Hydrangea will scramble on or over almost any object. Thus, it is useful for growing over stone walls or up any form of masonry. The wall of a brick or stone building or a chimney which extends down the side of a house are other suitable planting locations. However, wooden buildings or fences are unsuitable. Climbing Hydrangea also grows well along the ground, either on flat or sloping terrain. The steep banks around the Cold Storage Building in our greenhouse area have been planted with it at four-foot intervals, to eventually create a ground-cover effect. Another site where this unusual plant may be seen is the rip-rap area along Wappingers Creek just south of the present Administration Building. In this location it will grow down over the rip-rap and eventually will form an attractive ground cover for an otherwise harsh element in the landscape.

This plant is easily available from at least one local nursery and can be planted in spring or autumn.

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